

I am Beth Ries from East Helena and I am here today to support SB46. I would like to first off thank Senator McGee for his courage and conviction for bringing this bill forth. My reasons for supporting this are liberty and justice for all people regardless of age, or environment and the future of our great state.

I would like to point out that liberty for all depends on the sanctity of life. Our US Constitution is based upon that fundamental principal. If we do not respect life, then the rest of the US and State of Montana Constitutions are meaningless.

I would like to describe the four main differences between a human fetus and a human being: Size, Level of Development, Environment and Degree of Dependency.

Let's take the first point, size: A fetus is obviously much smaller than a newborn because it accumulates fat and organs and cells as it develops. Just because it is smaller does not give someone a right to destroy it or make it less human. If that were the case, than fat people would be more human than skinny people.

The second point is level of development. As we age, our bodies develop different functions. Infants cannot chew, toddlers cannot run very fast, and adolescents' bodies are all going through a tremendous changes, physically, and psychologically. As we develop, we do not gain personhood because we are already a human being. A four year old girl is not less of a human than a 14 year old just because the toddler has not fully developed. Our physical level of development does not determine whether we are human.

Thirdly, Our environment doesn't determine whether we are human or not; the fetus and a baby are both human, regardless of their environment. For example, when you left your house this morning your environment was changed did you lose your humanity? Just because your environment changes doesn't mean you change.

And finally, fetus' are completely dependent upon their mothers for their well being. Well, there are probably hundreds of people in the Tri-County area who rely on insulin, heart medication and pacemakers to live. Does this make them less human because they have to rely on something to survive. If it did, then you are advocating killing your fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers who are using any drug to stay alive. Fetus' are just smaller versions of yourself.

The MT Republican platform clearly states, quote "We affirm our belief in traditional family values and support the preservation of innocent human life at every stage of life beginning at conception."

Those who would destroy a fetus via an abortion will argue it's not viable. But that is not really the point because as medical technology advances, so does a fetus' viability. When the Roe v. Wade decision came down, they said viability was at 28 weeks, now it is at 24 weeks. Just last year in Great Falls, a woman delivered a baby at 23 weeks. At almost a year, Brentlee Bomgardner is a healthy baby boy. Some would say this is a miracle, but if you allow the doctors to do the work that they take an oath to uphold, miracles will happen every day.

The state of Montana does have compelling interest in the life of the unborn child, because that child might grow up to be a useful citizen, serving in the armed forces, the work force, and among the ranks of taxpayers. We have an obligation to allow that child to attend our schools, to grow and make a difference in our state. Please allow this amendment to go forward. And in conclusion, aren't you glad that your mother chose life for you?



Brentlee March 2008, 23 weeks gestation Brentlee February 2009, 10 Months old

MT Pro-life Coalition